

**REMARKS**

**Status**

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-18 are pending in the application. The present amendment does not add or cancel any claims. Accordingly, it is claims 1, 2, 5 and 7-18 which are at issue.

**The Rejection**

Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-12 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiseman (US 6,530,482). Claims 13, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiseman and further in view of Fisher et al. (WO 03/013690). Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiseman and further in view of Roff, Jr. (US 5,593,582) and Muller (US 4,319,990).

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the search of the prior art, the Office Action, and the time spent during a phone interview on December 16, 2009.

**Remarks Directed to the Rejection of  
Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

Independent claim 1 has been carefully amended such that the flow distributor is downstream from the primary upper screen assembly and when set for parallel *or* series operation distributes the filtrate from the primary upper screen to the remaining first *and* second screen assemblies. Support for the amendment is drawn from Figures 4A, 4B and 5C, along with accompanying description of the figures in the specification. In addition, it is appreciated that currently amended claim 1 provides a screen area available for screening of the filtrate that is effectively doubled the screen area taught in the prior art and as stated in the specification at page 9, lines 5-10.

In contrast, Wiseman teaches only two screen assemblies. In addition, when the flow distributor is set for parallel operation the filtrate is distributed onto only one screen. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of Wiseman.

Regarding claims 2, 5, 7-12 and 14, these claims depend upon independent claim 1 which is believed to be in allowable form. Therefore, claims 2, 5, 7-12 and 14 are also believed to be in allowable form and Applicant requests that the rejection of claims 1, 2, 5, 7-12 and 14 be withdrawn and the claims moved towards allowance.

**Remarks Directed to the Rejection of  
the Remaining Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)**

Claims 13, 15, 16 and 17 are dependent upon claim 1 which is now believed to be in allowable form. Therefore, claims 13, 15, 16 and 17 are also believed to be in allowable form.

**Conclusion**

In view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Any questions, comments, or suggestions the Examiner may have which would place the application in still better condition for allowance should be directed to the undersigned attorney.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 07-1180.

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Respectfully submitted,

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